

Michigan
Department
of Human
Services

Prepared by the
DHS Office of
Communications
(517) 373-7394

Articles in Today's Clips

Friday, May 30, 2008

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

TOPIC	PAGE
Nathaniel Abraham	2-8
Children's Rights	9-11
Child Abuse/Neglect	12-13
SIDS/Safe Sleep	14-15
DHS Budget	16
Assistance Programs	17-19
DHS Employees	20-21

Abraham arraigned on drug charges

Notorious 22-year-old freed last year in '97 slaying

By JOHN WISELY AND BEN SCHMITT • FREE PRESS STAFF WRITERS • May 30, 2008

-
-
- [Print this page](#)
- [E-mail this article](#)

- Share this article:
- [Del.icio.us](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Digg](#)
- [Reddit](#)
- [Newsvine](#)
- [What's this?](#)

A Pontiac judge ordered Nathaniel Abraham, released from jail last year after being the youngest person in Michigan to be convicted of murder at the age of 11, held on \$10,000 cash bond after arraigning him on a charge of possession with intent to distribute the street drug ecstasy.

ADVERTISEMENT

If convicted, Abraham faces a maximum of 20 years in prison.

Abraham said nothing during his video arraignment from the jail. Pontiac District Judge Cynthia Walker scheduled a pre-exam conference for 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 10. Assistant Oakland County Prosecutor Beth Hand sought a \$250,000 bond, saying Abraham poses a threat to the community.

“He continues to engage in criminal activity, the defendant admits ecstasy use, and he poses a threat to the community,” said Hand.

Undercover officers were working surveillance at about 1 a.m. in the neighborhood where there had been three separate armed robberies recently, when one of them witnessed what appeared to be a drug sale between Abraham and a man on a bicycle.

Abraham, 22, had parked a red 1970 Cadillac convertible in the parking lot of a Sunoco station on North Perry Street just south of Pontiac Northern High School. After the officers witnessed the exchange, they called for additional officers and moved in on Abraham, who was standing behind the vehicle with the trunk open. As the officers approached, they asked to see Abraham’s hand, and he said he was just changing a tire.

“He didn’t see the guys coming up behind him, and he threw away a bag,” said Pontiac police Sgt. Kevin Braddock.

When officers recovered a purple Crown Royal liquor bag, they found inside 254 individual tablets of the street drug ecstasy. Police said the pills typically sell on the street for between \$10 and \$30 each. Abraham was arrested without incident, and the vehicle, which did have a flat, was impounded. They expect to arraign him as early as 11 a.m. today

<http://www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Abraham+arraigned+on+drug+charges&e...> 05/30/2008

Abraham arraigned on drug charges

on drug charges in Pontiac District Court, court officials said.

John Cromer, who has served as a mentor and spokesman for Abraham, said he learned of the arrest this morning.

“Obviously, I am shocked and devastated,” Cromer said today.

He and Abraham were connected through Hartford Memorial Baptist Church in Detroit, which they attend.

Cromer formerly worked for America Works, a national program that helps ex-offenders find jobs.

Abraham was released from juvenile incarceration for the murder charge in January of last year after turning 21 and vowed to turn his life around. He recently recorded a rap record.

Wayne County Circuit Judge Craig Strong, who had supported Abraham and went clothes shopping with him last year, had trouble processing the news.

“He was doing so well, “ Strong said today. “It seemed like he was off to such a great start. Let’s hope there’s some explanation to this.”

Strong said Abraham had a lot of supporters.

“There were so many people in his corner trying to show him positive lifestyle examples,” he said. “If it’s true, it would be such a disappointment to so many who stood behind him.”

Strong said Abraham also encountered a lot of detractors.

“There are a lot of people out there who wanted something like this to happen,” he said. “Aww, man, this is terrible.”

Find this article at:

<http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080530/NEWS03/80530045>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.



Friday, May 30, 2008

Former Abraham guardian: Drug arrest 'very disappointing'

Delores Flynn, Mike Martindale and George Hunter / The Detroit News

PONTIAC -- The network of people who put their faith in Nathaniel Abraham's ability to turn his life around were keenly disappointed when they got the news that the young man who captured international attention as an 11-year-old when he killed a Pontiac man was charged today with dealing drugs.

Abraham, 22, was arrested after an alleged drug deal Friday in the parking lot of a gas station in Pontiac. Police say Abraham had 254 Ecstasy pills in his possession. He was charged via video arraignment today in 50th District Court with possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance, 20-year felony. Bond was set at \$10,000.

"I'm very sad today," Abraham's former guardian, Elaine Rosati, said. "We worked very hard to get him ready to live in the world, and now this happens. It's very disappointing."

About six plainclothes Pontiac Police officers and Michigan State Police troopers were operating a juvenile curfew detail at 1 a.m. when they noticed a possible drug sale between a male subject on a bike and a man at a vehicle, who was later identified as 22-year-old Abraham, at the station in the 1100 block of N. Perry, according to Sgt. Kevin Braddock.

A couple of officers approached Abraham, who was standing behind the open trunk of the car, while other officers approached from behind. As officers got closer, Abraham was seen throwing a purple Crown Royal liquor bag back into the trunk of the car, according to police. It was later investigated and contained what were suspected to be individually wrapped Ecstasy pills.

In January 2007, Abraham was released from juvenile detention because he had reached 21 years of age. His case drew international attention when he shot and killed Ronnie Greene, 21, of Pontiac, with a stolen .22-caliber rifle in November 1997.

He was charged with first-degree murder under a get-tough Michigan law that allows prosecutors to charge juveniles of any age with serious felonies. The law gave judges the option to sentence juveniles to adult prison time or keep them in juvenile detention until age 21.

After a jury convicted Abraham of second-degree murder, Judge Eugene Arthur Moore sentenced Abraham to eight years of juvenile detention with a mandated release at age 21.

During those years, Abraham earned his GED and began college classes but continued to struggle with anger management and authority figures.

After his release, Abraham recorded a rap album and talked with youngsters about staying out of trouble.

"I'm very disappointed and particularly sad for the hundreds of people who worked hard to rehabilitate him," Moore said today in a written statement.

Nicole Edwards, sister of the murder victim, also expressed disappointment in Abraham's drug arrest.

"I thought he would rehabilitate himself," she said. "This is like a slap in the face."

You can reach Delores Flynn at (248) 647-7225 or dflynn@detnews.com.

Find this article at:

<http://www.detroitnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080530/METRO02/805300419>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

© Copyright 2008 The Detroit News. All rights reserved.



Pontiac police arrest Nathaniel Abraham on drug charges

5/30/2008, 9:24 a.m. ET

By JEFF KAROUB
The Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — A man charged with murder as an 11-year-old a decade ago and who spent the rest of his childhood in state custody was arrested Friday on a drug charge in the city where he grew up, police said.

Pontiac police Sgt. Brian McLaughlin said Nathaniel Abraham, 22, was arrested about 1 a.m. at a gas station. He was charged with possession with intent to deliver narcotics.

Officers said Abraham had 254 pills on him that they believe were Ecstasy tablets. Plain clothes officers say they saw what they believe to be a hand-to-hand drug sale between Abraham and a person on a bicycle.

Abraham, who is being held at the Oakland County Jail, could face arraignment as early as Friday afternoon. McLaughlin described Abraham as cooperative when he was taken into custody.

A message was left Friday for attorney Daniel Bagdade, who had represented Abraham.

Abraham was convicted of second-degree murder in the slaying of 18-year-old Ronnie Greene and finished serving his juvenile sentence in January 2007.

Abraham became the first young person charged with murder to be prosecuted under a 1997 Michigan law that allowed adult prosecutions of children of any age in a serious felony case. Abraham was convicted as an adult for Greene's death outside a convenience store in Pontiac, but was sentenced as a juvenile.

Since his release, Abraham has taken college classes, spoken at churches and schools and recorded a rap album.

Police say Abraham gave a Southfield address at the time of his arrest.

Copyright 2008 Associated Press. All rights reserved.
This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.

© 2008 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.



Friday, May 30, 2008

Nathaniel Abraham to be arraigned on drug charges

Delores Flynn and Mike Martindale / The Detroit News

PONTIAC -- Nathaniel Abraham, who captured international attention as an 11-year-old when he was arrested for killing a Pontiac man, was charged with possession of 254 Ecstasy pills during an alleged drug deal in the parking lot of a gas station in Pontiac today.

About six plain clothes Pontiac Police officers and Michigan State Troopers were operating a juvenile curfew detail at 1 a.m. when they noticed a possible drug sale between a male subject on a bike and a man at a vehicle who was later identified as 22-year-old Abraham at the station in the 1100 block of N. Perry, according to Sgt. Kevin Braddock.

A couple of officers approached Abraham, who was standing behind the open trunk of the car, while other officers approached from behind. As officers got closer, Abraham was seen throwing a purple Crown Royal liquor bag back into the trunk of the car, according to police. It was later investigated and contained the individually-wrapped Ecstasy.

Abraham was arrested and is in the Oakland County Jail. He faces a possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance charge. He is set to be arraigned at 11 a.m. today in 50th District Court.

In January 2007, Abraham was released from juvenile detention because he had reached 21 years of age. His case drew international attention when he shot and killed Ronnie Greene, 21, of Pontiac, with a stolen .22-caliber rifle in November 1997.

He was charged with first-degree murder under a get-tough Michigan law that allows prosecutors to charge juveniles of any age with serious felonies.

The law gave judges the option to sentence juveniles to adult prison time or keep them in juvenile detention until age 21.

After a jury convicted Abraham of second-degree murder, Judge Eugene Arthur Moore sentenced Abraham to eight years of juvenile detention with a mandated release at age 21.

During those years, Abraham earned his GED and began college classes but continued to struggle with anger management and authority figures.

After his release, Abraham recorded a rap album and talked with youngsters about staying out of trouble.

You can reach Delores Flynn at (248) 647-7225 or dflynn@detnews.com.

Nathaniel Abraham arrested on drug charges

Notorious 22-year-old freed last year in '97 slaying

FREE PRESS STAFF • May 30, 2008

-
-
- [Print this page](#)
- [E-mail this article](#)

- Share this article:
- [Del.icio.us](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Digg](#)
- [Reddit](#)
- [Newsvine](#)
- [What's this?](#)

Nathaniel Abraham, released from jail last year after being the youngest person in Michigan to be convicted of murder at the age of 11, is back in jail this morning.

ADVERTISEMENT

Pontiac police say the now 22-year-old Abraham was arrested about 1 a.m. today on a charge of dealing drugs. Abraham was reportedly speaking with another person on a bicycle about what Michigan state troopers believed to be a possible drug deal.

The arrest occurred after Abraham was stopped outside of a Cadillac convertible at a gas station on N. Perry in Pontiac.

Abraham was speaking with officers in front of him but didn't notice assisting officers coming up behind him and tossed a small purple Crown Royal liquor bag to the side.

The bag was picked up and found to contain 254 individual suspected ecstasy pills by officers.

He could be arraigned on the charges as soon as today.

John Cromer, who has served as a mentor and spokesman for Abraham, said he learned of the arrest this morning.

"Obviously, I am shocked and devastated," Cromer said today.

He and Abraham were connected through Hartford Memorial Baptist Church in Detroit where they both attend.

Cromer, formerly worked for America Works, a national program that helps ex-offenders find jobs.

Abraham was released from juvenile incarceration for the murder charge in January of last year after turning 21 and vowed to turn his life around. He recently recorded a rap record.

D.H.S. HALTS NEGOTIATIONS, MOUNTS DEFENSE IN FOSTER CARE SUIT

GONGWER Michigan Report
May 29, 2008

After months of out of court negotiations in a lawsuit over the state's lackluster foster care system, the Department of Human Services issued a statement this week declaring that talks are over and it will now "mount a vigorous defense in court."

"The department put forth a good faith effort to come to an agreement that would be fair to the families and children we serve," DHS spokesperson Maureen Sorbet said in a prepared statement.

This is the second time the advocacy group Children's Rights and DHS have tried discussions out of court, with DHS calling off efforts during last year's budget crunch because it said it didn't have the money to enact the reforms Children's Rights wanted.

But things seemed to be going more smoothly this round. In fact, as recently as April (See [Gongwer Michigan Report, April 9, 2008](#)) DHS Director Ismael Ahmed told the House Families and Children's Services Committee that negotiations were going well and that a settlement seemed likely.

Because they are still involved in litigation, department officials wouldn't give details about the proverbial straw that broke down talks, but said only that the two sides found themselves at an impasse on Wednesday and that they will meet in court on July 7.

With a lot of improvements already stemming from the litigation, but also \$400 million in potential annual sanctions on the line if the state loses, the outcome of the suit could lead to improvement or a crushing blow for DHS.

"For better or worse, the Michigan child welfare system will not be the same after this lawsuit," Mr. Ahmed has said.

One of the ways DHS is seeking to clean up the foster care system is by developing the Child Welfare Improvement Task Force, on which sits legislators, the department, families, the community and nonprofit members.

[Sen. Gilda Jacobs](#) (D-Huntington Woods), a member of the taskforce, said she is very disappointed that the department wasn't able to come to an agreement.

"Not only is it costly to go to court, but we never know what results will be," she said. "We clearly can't take a cut in the budget."

Still, she said, she's optimistic that there still can be a resolution that won't break DHS financially.

Meanwhile, Ms. Jacobs said, she's excited about her place on the taskforce and about the positive impact she's sure the group and Mr. Ahmed's influence will have in child welfare, no matter how the lawsuit plays out.



Friday, May 30, 2008

Talks stall in suit over foster care system

July 7 trial date set in case involving Michigan's program that's allegedly riddled with failures.

David Eggert / Associated Press

LANSING -- Settlement talks have broken down again in a federal class-action lawsuit against Michigan's foster care system.

U.S. District Judge Nancy Edmunds in Detroit set a July 7 trial date after negotiators reached an impasse Wednesday.

This is the second time negotiations have stopped. They ended last year when the Michigan Department of Human Services said it had no money to enact reforms. Talks resumed earlier this year.

If the state loses the suit, it could cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars. The state is responsible for about 19,000 abused and neglected children.

Children's Rights, a New York-based child advocacy nonprofit group, sued the state in 2006 on the behalf of thousands of children in state custody.

A court-ordered study has shown the foster care system is riddled with failures, one so understaffed that children are not getting routine medical and dental exams.

Marcia Lowry, executive director of Children's Rights, said a lot of progress was made during the latest talks but an issue was raised two weeks ago that could not be resolved. She declined to give specifics.

"We're full-speed ahead in trial preparation," Lowry said.

DHS spokeswoman Maureen Sorbet said in a statement that the agency will mount a vigorous defense in court. She said the department will accelerate changes already under way -- hiring more child welfare workers, licensing foster parents who are relatives of abused or neglected children and creating a task force to help improve the system.

Both sides have wanted to avoid a trial but also have prepared in case an agreement cannot be reached.

Two dozen DHS managers and supervisors spent hours giving depositions in the fall. And Children's Rights earlier this year made public two scathing reports by expert witnesses it will use at trial.

One expert who reviewed the deaths of five foster children concluded that abused and neglected children are far too likely to be no safer in foster care.

The state dismissed the findings as one-sided and promised its own reports.

The state hired 200 more foster care workers this budget year and boosted rates paid to private agencies that care for abused, neglected or delinquent children.

Outside experts worry the moves will not be enough at trial.

Find this article at:

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080530/POLITICS/805300331>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

© Copyright 2008 The Detroit News. All rights reserved.



Midland judge rules on child abuse charges

Posted by LaNia Coleman | The Saginaw News May 30, 2008 06:03AM

MIDLAND -- A judge decides today whether to dismiss a case against a man accused of abusing his 3-year-old son.

Midland attorney Richard L. Lee, Jr., has asked Circuit Judge Jonathan E. Lauderbach to drop a single charge of first-degree child abuse against Matthew S. Liedel.

Lee claims evidence presented during Liedel's District Court preliminary hearing did not provide probable cause that the 28-year-old Midland man caused the boy's injuries.

Investigators allege that Liedel on Jan. 1 took the child to the emergency room at MidMichigan Medical Center-Midland and told hospital staff the youngster had a seizure, Saginaw News records show.

Doctors in Midland transferred the tot to Flint and police there arrested Liedel after Midland County prosecutors authorized a warrant charging him with aggravated assault.

Midland County District Judge Stephen E. Carras later arraigned Liedel on the child abuse charge, which carries a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison.

© 2008 Michigan Live. All Rights Reserved.



Powered by Clickability

Children removed from meth home in Michigan

By Beth Boehne

Story Created: May 29, 2008 at 5:18 PM EDT

Story Updated: May 29, 2008 at 5:19 PM EDT

JONES, Mich. — Two young children were removed from a Jones home Thursday morning after police found a methamphetamine lab, drugs and weapons in their home, the Cass County Drug Enforcement Team reported.

Related Content

- [Police finding toxic meth trash](#)
- [Indiana State Police found 820 meth labs last year](#)
- [Police losing most powerful weapon in war against meth](#)
- [Smallest victims in methamphetamine epidemic pay greatest price](#)

Acting on a tip, authorities went to the home on the 61000 block of South Main Street about 9 a.m. There, detectives found remnants of a methamphetamine lab, methamphetamine product, marijuana and weapons, police said.

A 32-year-old woman and her 31-year-old husband were taken into custody and charged with numerous drug related offenses, felony firearms and child abuse, police said. Two children ages 3 years and 4 years also were removed from the home by the Michigan Department of Human Services.

Anyone with information about this or any other felony crimes may call the Cass County Drug Enforcement Team at (269) 782-5206 or the anonymous tip line at (800) 462-9328.

Find this article at:

<http://www.wsbt.com/news/local/19364644.html>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

©2007 WSBT-TV. All Rights Reserved.

Study finds bacteria may be tied to SIDS

By MARIA CHENG • ASSOCIATED PRESS • May 30, 2008

-
-
- [Print this page](#)
- [E-mail this article](#)
- Share this article:
- [Del.icio.us](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Digg](#)
- [Reddit](#)
- [Newsvine](#)
- [What's this?](#)

LONDON — A baffling phenomenon known as sudden infant death syndrome is one of the leading causes of death for children under 1. Now, British researchers say they may have found a contributing factor: bacteria.

ADVERTISEMENT

They found potentially dangerous bacteria such as *Staphylococcus aureus* and *E. coli* in nearly half of all babies who died suddenly and without explanation over a decade at a London hospital. Their findings are in today's *Lancet* medical journal.

"This may be another piece to the puzzle," said Marian Willinger, a SIDS expert at the U.S. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development who was not connected to the British study.

The researchers cautioned, however, that while the bacteria were found in the SIDS babies, that does not necessarily mean the bugs were responsible. Bacterial infections have long been suspected by some doctors to play a role in SIDS.

"We don't know whether it's a cause or if it's identifying another potential risk factor," said Dr. Nigel Klein, a professor at the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, where the study was conducted, and one of the paper's authors.

He said that the higher level of bacteria might be evidence of another condition that killed the baby, such as a room that was too hot or had poor ventilation. Or it may have been coincidental.

A SIDS diagnosis means that no other cause of death can be found in an otherwise healthy infant who dies suddenly, usually in their sleep. In the United States, SIDS kills more than 2,000 infants every year.

The researchers used autopsy samples from 470 infants who died suddenly and unexpectedly between 1996 and 2005. They found dangerous bacteria in 181 babies, or nearly half of the 365 whose deaths were unexplained. There were similar bacteria in about a quarter (14 of 53) of the babies who died of known causes, excluding those who died of bacterial infections.

Most of the bacteria were detected in the babies' lungs and spleens.

Study finds bacteria may be tied to SIDS

At birth, mothers transfer some of their antibodies against infection to their babies. But when babies are from 8 to 10 weeks old, the maternal antibodies have nearly run out and the babies typically have not started producing enough of their own.

That could make them particularly vulnerable to bacterial infections, said James Morris, a pathologist at the Royal Infirmary in Lancaster, who coauthored an accompanying commentary in the journal.

SIDS typically strikes when babies are between 8 and 10 weeks old.

“The study is a good indicator that certain bacteria might be involved in causing sudden infant deaths,” he said.

Willinger suggested that bacterial infections in infants might simply aggravate other risk factors for SIDS, such as smoke exposure or babies sleeping on their stomachs.

“The bacteria in combination with other co-factors might push these babies over the edge,” she said.

Recommendations for preventing SIDS include putting babies to sleep on their backs and avoiding putting too many blankets on them.

The study was paid for by the Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths, a British charity.

Find this article at:

<http://www.freep.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080530/NEWS07/80530052>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

MIRS Capitol Capsule, Tuesday, May 27, 2008

Senate Kicks Out 8 Budgets

The Senate cleaned out its calendar today, kicking out eight budgets plus Capital Outlay on the eve of the annual Mackinac Policy Conference in a more than seven-hour session.

As he did in Appropriations Committee on Wednesday, Chair Ron **JELINEK** (R-Three Rivers) entreated senators to be mindful of the revenue estimating conference estimates and "resist any and all spending increase amendments" (See "**Sparks Fly Over DLEG, DEQ Budgets**," 5/21/08).

"The budgets will still require somewhere down the line \$150 million in less spending," Jelinek said, adding, "Let's be responsible."

As expected, there were a slew of amendments anyway, mostly proposed by Democrats. Many were similar to those introduced in Approps last week and most failed.

No budget received immediate effect. Several Democrats voted no on immediate effect for budgets, with a number of Republicans not voting. Sen. Mike **PRUSI** (D-Ishpeming) said he was surprised the Senate even voted on I.E. at this stage of the game.

That leaves two big, controversial budgets for Wednesday, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), which Republicans have targeted for alleged inefficiencies, and General Government, which didn't include the 4 percent revenue sharing hike local municipalities were counting on.

DHS

The \$4.64 billion Department of Human Services (DHS) budget passed 34-4, with Sens. Nancy **CASSIS** (R-Novi), Deb **CHERRY** (D-Burton) Gretchen **WHITMER** (D-East Lansing) and Irma **CLARKCOLEMAN** (D-Detroit) voting no. **HB 5814** was the biggest budget before the Senate.

Cherry said she opposed the budget because counseling and therapy costs for privatizing foster care will cost the state "untold millions of dollars," according to DHS. She said it didn't make sense to spend money there instead of on day care and other programs.

Four amendments were offered from Sen. Martha G. **SCOTT** (D-Highland Park). She wanted a \$10 million increase for day care funding, but DHS Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Bill **HARDIMAN** (R-Kentwood) said it would cost too much and it failed on a non-record roll call vote.

"Nothing against this particular amendment except it costs \$10 million," Jelinek said.

Scott also asked for a \$1 million increase in prevention programs for children 0-3, which failed 18-20, with Sen. Randy **RICHARDVILLE** (R-Monroe) crossing over. Then there was Scott's amendment to take \$200,000 for mental health treatment for juvenile offenders, which failed on a party-line 17-21 vote.

Her last proposal was expanding Family Resource Centers, which provide DHS services in schools, in Genesee and Ingham counties. As there was no additional cost, this one passed.



Friday, May 30, 2008

Michigan gets \$16M for job retraining

Deb Price / Detroit News Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON -- Michigan will get \$16 million in additional federal funds to help retrain workers who have lost jobs due to foreign trade, a Michigan lawmaker announced Thursday.

The U.S. Department of Labor is giving Michigan the extra money from its reserve to "assist Michigan workers who are suffering hardship due to trade and economic globalization," said U.S. Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Menominee.

The funds are enough to help an additional 7,530 workers in the federal Trade Adjustment Assistance program by retraining them for new occupations.

They bring the total Michigan has received in TAA retraining money for fiscal year 2008 to \$24 million.

That's still about \$1.5 million less than the state received in the previous fiscal year. But the state has the option to ask for more.

"We have seen increasing numbers of people enrolling in training, and we're encouraging them to do so through No Worker Left Behind and other initiatives," said Liz Boyd, spokeswoman for Gov. Jennifer Granholm.

"If we find that we need more funding to serve these workers, we will go after it."

In addition to the \$24 million in TAA retraining money, the state receives other federal money to pay for such TAA benefits as relocating workers and providing help while they are in training.

To qualify for the grab bag of benefits under the Labor Department rules, workers must show they have lost their jobs as the result of "increased imports or shifts in production out of the United States."

Find this article at:

<http://www.detnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080530/POLITICS/805300399>

☐ Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

MIRS Capitol Capsule, Tuesday, May 27, 2008

Human Service Orgs Back House Energy Bills

Human service organizations from across Michigan - including the Michigan Community Action Agency Association (MCAAA), The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW) and WARM Training Center - have joined the Michigan Jobs and Energy Coalition to support the House energy bills passed last month.

"This bill strikes a good balance between ensuring Michigan has reliable and affordable energy to meet its future power needs and developing a strong energy efficiency program to reduce consumption," said Bob **CHAPMAN**, executive director for WARM Training Center, a low-income energy efficiency advocacy organization. "This package includes consideration for low-income customers and is a real comprehensive and statewide solution."

The Coalition - which includes the Michigan Chamber of Commerce and the Michigan Manufacturers Association along with DTE Energy and Consumers Energy, labor and many small businesses - now has support from more than 200 organizations and individuals, including low-income advocacy groups, human service agencies and government representatives.

Group: Energy Proposal Unfairly Targets Poor

The House's energy reform proposal puts the poor and others with fixed income at risk of higher prices, the Michigan Catholic Conference (MCC) said in a letter today to the Senate.

MCC Associate for Public Policy, Paul **STANKEWITZ** urged the Senate Energy Policy & Public Utilities Committee to amend the package of bills in order to "protect Michigan's vulnerable populations."

Among the changes proposed by the MCC was a call for the Senate to devise a "rate deskewing plan" to protect low-income residential ratepayers. The current plan takes away the subsidization of residential rates by commercial and industrial customers.

"Michigan has historically 'skewed' utility rates to the advantage of residential customers...to protect the poor and vulnerable. The legislation passed by the House of Representatives will create a significant budget crisis for the families of Michigan," Stankewitz said.

LSJ – Letters to the Editor
Friday, May 30, 2008

Help the hungry

Imagine opening the pantry every day and finding it bare. Going through life every day without food is a common struggle around the world.

Prices have gone up due to global warming, increased gas prices and low rainfall. If nothing is done, America will soon fall victim to hunger. Strange weather events, such as droughts and floods, have caused many exporting countries to decrease production.

Fortunately for the U.S., technology and developments can help cope with the food shortage. However, some Third World countries cannot.

Many people ask, "What can I do, I'm only one person?" With organization and passion, one person can do wonders for the crisis. While one person's voice is loud, the voice of many is louder. There are many foundations such as UNICEF that make the world a happier place. Without proper action, millions of people will continue to go through life hungry.

Cameron Cochran
Mason

Popular fourth-grade teacher in Brighton retiring

Posted by [lcarolin](#) May 30, 2008 00:00AM



JAMIE CHARBENEAU-PISELLA, THE LIVINGSTON COMMUNITY NEWS From left, students Gabby Miller, Matthew Gorecki and Emily Tallman, teacher Karen Wirth, and students Alina Trofimova, and Erik Kern look at book covers they created to go with the book, "The Iron Dragon Never Sleeps."

BY LISA CAROLIN *The Livingston Community News*

If you are one of the hundreds of "Wirth Winners" who passed through Lindbom Elementary School in Brighton you may want to stop by the school Monday to help celebrate the career of longtime teacher Karen Wirth.

After 41 years of teaching, Wirth is retiring at the end of this school year. The celebration is set for 4 to 6 p.m. at the Lindbom media center.

"I'm leaving still wanting to be here," says Wirth. "I am retiring for my family and because I want to go while I feel I'm still doing my job 100 percent."

Wirth says her retirement plans include volunteering at Lindbom two days a week and spending more time with her husband, Al, who has frequently been a guest in her classroom, offering his expertise on science and computers.

"My husband and I have a son and daughter-in-law in California and two grandchildren who are the light of our lives," says Wirth. "We want to visit them more often."

As far as her plans to keep volunteering at Lindbom go, Wirth says, "Teaching is who I am and what I do. Over the 41 years I've been teaching, that spark of wanting to be with children hasn't diminished."

She says she always has referred to her students as "Wirth Winners," and she says her final class truly represents what the name means to her.

"Wirth Winners are helpful, they make good decisions, and have kind hearts," she says. "You always try to pull the best from each student so they have a positive attitude about themselves."

"I believe that if you set your goals high, great things can happen. If you truly put forth all your effort, people recognize that, and we can't expect any more from you if you're giving your best."

Lindbom Principal Kay Short says she has heard current and former students describe Wirth as "intelligent, respectful, giving, helpful, fun, awesome and a teacher who really prepared them for fifth grade."

"Karen is just a gem," says Short. "She is a woman of great character and an excellent educator. When she told our staff last month that she was retiring, there wasn't a dry eye in the place."

Wirth grew up in Roseville and says she knew in high school that she wanted to be either a teacher or a social worker.

"I loved learning and imparting knowledge to others," says Wirth. "There's something special about watching children light up as they learn and make discoveries."

She received her undergraduate degree from Michigan State University, married, and moved to Midland where her husband was attending school. Her first job was as a child welfare trainee for the Michigan Department of Social Services in Gratiot County.

"I realized that I had such an emotional attachment to children, that teaching would be a better choice," she explains.

She taught psychology to high school seniors in Midland while she earned her master's degree in elementary education.

When her husband was admitted to the University of Michigan, the couple moved to Brighton - right by the Mill Pond - and have lived in the same house ever since.

Wirth began teaching the fifth grade in 1969, first in what is now the Brighton Education and Community Center. She then moved to Lindbom Elementary School. She resigned in 1974 when the couple's son, Ben, was born.

"Being a mom was extremely important to me, but I loved teaching and kept working as a substitute teacher and would take longer and longer subbing positions as Ben got older."

Ben attended Lindbom, and Wirth calls the school her "other home." She volunteered as a room mother, helped with the PTO and band. When Ben went to college, she returned to full-time teaching as a fourth-grade teacher at Lindbom.

Wirth was Lindbom third-grade teacher Mary Durbin Beane's mentor teacher when she was hired in 2000.

"Karen is truly an educator's educator," says Beane. "She is wise and kind and generous. She takes each child on as if they were her own child, and each one feels prepared for life when they leave her class."

"Karen taught me the balance of being a teacher and working with families, students and paperwork. Every time I was a little bit lost, she was at my door with an idea or to tell me that what I was doing was right."

Lisa Carolin can be reached at lcarin@livingstoncommunitynews.com or at 810-844-2010.

Categories: [Features](#)

Comments

Footer